



Chickamauga and Chattanooga National Military Park Traffic Impact Study and Subarea Transportation Plan



Traffic Impact Study and Subarea Transportation Plan Stakeholder Participation Panel February 2, 2004 – 1:30 PM City of Fort Oglethorpe Constitution Hall

Meeting Notes

Attendees:

John Culpepper, City of Chickamauga
Phil Morton, City of Rossville
Sherry Foster, City of Rossville
Charles Crawford, Georgia Battlefields Association
Charles Geiger, Georgia Battlefields Association
Ronnie Moore, Chattanooga Times-Free Press
David Ashburn, Walker County
Chris Jaeschke, Federal Highway Administration
Billy Cooper, Action Video
Sue Bales, Fort Oglethorpe Citizens Advisory Board
Debi Wilson, Fort Oglethorpe Downtown Development Authority
Judd Burkhart, Mayor, Fort Oglethorpe
Olney Meadows, Catoosa County
Kay Parish, Friends of the Park
Clara Swann, Friends of the Park
Sam Elliott, Friends of the Park
Patrick Reed, National Park Service – Chickamauga and Chattanooga National Military Park
Sam Weddle, National Park Service – Chickamauga and Chattanooga National Military Park
Jim Szykowski, National Park Service – Chickamauga and Chattanooga National Military Park
Jim Ogden, National Park Service – Chickamauga and Chattanooga National Military Park
Nola Chavez, National Park Service
Karen Rhodes, Chattanooga-Hamilton Regional Planning
David Kenemer, Coosa Valley Regional Development Council
David Howerin, Coosa Valley Regional Development Council
Kimberly Patterson, Coosa Valley Regional Development Council
Annette Eason, Georgia Department of Transportation
Cindy VanDyke, Georgia Department of Transportation
Ulysses Mitchell, Georgia Department of Transportation
Dan Krechmer, Cambridge Systematics
Keli Paul, Cambridge Systematics
Rob McGinnis, John Milner Associates
Marta Rosen, Day Wilburn Associates, Inc.
Kristen Wescott, Day Wilburn Associates, Inc.
Rod Wilburn, Day Wilburn Associates, Inc.

Welcome/Introductions

The stakeholder meeting opened with a welcome from Rod Wilburn (Day Wilburn Associates, Inc.). Pat Reed (Superintendent, CCNMP) invited all the members to actively participate in the process and emphasized that everyone was a partner in this study process. Ulysses Mitchell



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(Georgia Department of Transportation) urged all to participate to make the meeting and study successful. Karen Rhodes (Chattanooga MPO) encouraged participation in this process as well as in the regional transportation planning process.

Meeting Format

The format for the SPP meeting was a presentation and discussion between the study team and the stakeholders. All attendees received a folder that contained December 8, 2003 meeting minutes; a study goals, needs and issues summary; an evaluation criteria summary; an improvement strategies matrix; and seven figures illustrating proposed strategies. The improvement strategies and figures were also displayed as large format boards to facilitate discussion.

Meeting Purpose

Rod Wilburn began the presentation by summarizing the meeting purpose which was to present strategies to address problems, issues, and needs that had been identified throughout the earlier tasks, including previous meeting with the Stakeholder Participation Panel (SPP). He reiterated that the study has two components, the Traffic Impact Study and the Battlefield Subarea. It is important for the stakeholder group to come to an understanding of the strategies as well as begin to find ways to package strategies for the final recommendation report. Rod added that the evaluation process was not complete and that it was important to generate feedback and input from the SPP in order to develop the preliminary recommendations.

Study Overview and Status

Marta Rosen (Day Wilburn Associates, Inc.) gave a brief overview of the study process to date. She indicated that the goals developed at the outset of the study have been carried throughout the process. Data collection and data analysis have been conducted and evaluation measures have been identified. The Chattanooga MPO travel demand model has been refined for use in this study. She pointed out that the evaluation measures differed by study area since the goals, issues and needs differ.

Improvement Strategies

Rod Wilburn gave an overview on how the improvement strategies were identified. He also presented an overview of the improvement strategy evaluation matrix. Four primary themes were used to group the strategies:

- North-South Mobility and Connectivity to Chattanooga
- East-West Mobility and Mobility within Ft. Oglethorpe
- Gateway Linkages between the Battlefield and Surrounding Area
- CCNMP Battlefield Visitor Experience/Operational Improvements

Each of the strategies was evaluated for impacts against 15 different criteria. The strategies impact on both the Traffic Impact Study area and Battlefield Subarea were considered. To provide a visual summary of the impacts, the matrix used symbols representing *positive*, *negative*, *no impact* or *not applicable* for each criteria.



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Rod indicated that some of the strategies may be in conflict with the study's goals and the stakeholders need to be open to discussion on the strategies. The stakeholders were asked to think about the strategies in a manner to end up with a "win-win" set of strategies at the end of the process.

Dan Krechmer (Cambridge Systematics), Keli Paul (Cambridge Systematics), Rob McGinnis (John Milner Associates) and Kristen Wescott (Day Wilburn Associates) facilitated the discussion regarding the strategies identification and evaluation. Discussion between the stakeholders and the study team was encouraged.

Stakeholder comments regarding the strategies themselves included whether there was an overall score for the strategies and whether the "preferred" strategies were already identified. The study team indicated that the strategies were not scored other than their indication of primarily positive, negative, or no impacts. The stakeholders should recognize they have an active role in determining the recommended set of strategies.

North-South Mobility strategy stakeholder comments included:

- Whether a new eastern bypass between the Park and Burning Bush Road would be feasible based on environmental and other costs. As an alternate, could the team consider improvements to existing roads connecting to the US 27 south of the Battlefield?
- Should all north-south improvement strategies east of Park be rated as having a positive impact on the Battlefield subarea since the strategies could reduce non-Park traffic inside the Park.
- The need to consider impacts on the Fort Oglethorpe business district by creating additional bypasses that could have by directing traffic away from the district.
- Congested or bottleneck conditions never existed in the Park on LaFayette Road before the US 27 relocation.
- Could the study team consider widening Osburn Road from US 27 relocation to the City of Chickamauga?
- Why doesn't the Park want to have people driving through the Battlefield?

East-West Mobility strategy stakeholder comments included:

- Widening McFarland Gap Road will not necessarily assist Fort Oglethorpe businesses.
- It would make sense to widen McFarland Gap Road to make it consistently 4-laned.

Gateway linkage strategy stakeholder comments included:

- Roads outside the Battlefield that lead into the Battlefield contribute to Park visitor experience.
- Businesses continue to relocate away from the northern section of LaFayette Road. Traffic is needed to sustain business activity. Is street-scaping considered an economic development tool?
- Businesses do not want to locate on LaFayette Road between SR 2 and the Park boundary.



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- The jurisdictions around the Battlefield need financial assistance to implement wayfinding/signage improvements.
- Impacts from the gateway improvement strategies are on the whole, positive.

Overall strategy comments included:

- Has the study team considered the economic impact of the strategies?
- There is a need to create a place people want to visit within Fort Oglethorpe.
- Some thought the study was to look solely at the impacts on Fort Oglethorpe from the relocation of US 27.
- How does the stakeholder group progress forward from here? Studies have been performed, but it's difficult to follow-up and implement recommendations.
- The local area needs to figure out what to do on its own, using the recommendations generated from this and other studies.
- Money is lacking for implementation.
- The need to consider connections of all mode-types (equestrian, bicycle, pedestrian, automobile) between the Battlefield and the surrounding area.
- Will the projects be phased for implementation?
- The Park wants all communities around the Park to prosper.

To get to the next step, Rod indicated the need for the stakeholder group to provide feedback as quickly as possible. The study team offered to conduct an additional session with the stakeholder group, but it was thought that another meeting would not be very beneficial. Instead the team will send out a comment form and meeting summary notes to the stakeholder group and solicit comment via mail, internet, or fax.

The final public meeting will be conducted on March 30, 2004 at Constitution Hall.